1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the Greek for this Albanian Moslem minority) and Communists when they fled Greece, from Italian reparations and the relinquishment of some lands by the royal family. These government-controlled lands total from one fourth to one third of all of the agricultural land in the country, and many of them are so inefficiently administered that they are not producing at anywhere near their full capacity. Some of the abuses often cited are:

Tenants have not been able to get title to land they have been working for thirty years.

Land and orchards have been auctioned for a one-year period to nonoperating individuals who sublet to peasants on crop-sharing basis, with both parties having little interest in maintaining soil fertility.

Large tracts of fertile farmland have been leased year after year for grazing purposes, either because of political pressure by stock owners or simply because of inefficient and shortsighted administration.

Other lands, idle for years, have suffered devasting damage from flood, for dikes and drainage ditches have not been maintained.

Orchards containing hundreds of thousands of olive and fruit trees have gone untended and unpruned for years.

Whether the problem lies in the lack of funds, as the National Bank claims, or in poor administrative practices, as the American Mission claims, or in both, it is obvious that there is much work ahead for those planning the more complete use of the Greek birthright in land and wanting to satisfy the peasant's desperate need for life-sustaining work.

The significance of land is shown in the importance of agricultural products in the total economy of the country. Let us look at the export figures for 1956–57. Out of the $213 million of exports, about $187.5 million, or 88 percent, was in agricultural products (cotton, tobacco, grapes, raisins, apples, and so on). The balance of $25.5 million represented mainly exports of chemicals, textiles, ores, and industrial raw materials.[20] These figures show that land is important not merely to the peasant but to all Greece as she today seeks to find markets abroad in order to get foreign exchange to import raw materials and finished products not available within her borders.

The rural Greeks, quite unconsciously on their part, remind us that one of life's basic relationships is that of man to the land.[21] In many studies I have made of rural people, I have found that this is a crucial focus, which many specialists from industrialized societies are apt to minimize or overlook, much to their disadvantage. To some peasants, still steeped in tradition, the earth is holy and is not treated in the light of modern knowledge to make it more productive; other peasants are taking up scientific agriculture and in doing so tend to think of the soil as a commodity. If tradition holds too tightly, which it probably will not do among the energetic Greek

1:Sanders Z-5# (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

474 [652] get a cooperative, we will have to wait a year to get a loan approved, and by that time we will have no need for the money." They thought that from 12 to 14 percent would be the customary interest charges set by the cooperative and the Bank and also assumed that security requirements would be very high.

[249] [664] [124] Peasants in the tobacco-growing areas in Northern Greece appreciated the fact that cooperatives there tried to introduce mechanization and also, from time to time, did some lobbying in their behalf. When in 1953 we asked the commandant of gendarmerie for Volos, who was in close touch with the villagers, about their views toward cooperatives he replied: "With the occupation and the war the cooperative conscience more or less disappeared. Now it is reviving and if things go normally there will be quick improvement. One reason for the difficulty is the effort by the government to mix politics in with the cooperative movement. Now the cooperatives undertake no teaching function. They did this before the war, which partially explained what success they achieved. Before the war, if a person wanted to be on the council of the cooperative, he had to go through special training. [654] The authorities say that they will do this again, but the Ministry of Agriculture is centering its teaching approach in the newly formed Agro Clubs."

He thought that in his area about 60 percent of the cooperatives were working and that 40 percent were either anemic or altogether defunct. [241] Around Volos the producers' and marketing cooperatives organized on a commodity basis — vegetables, dairy, fruit, olives — worked better than the general-purpose or purely credit type. Very often, he pointed out, the relationship between the local cooperative and the representatives of the Agricultural Bank is strained, for the local council will give inaccurate information to the Bank, saying that a would-be borrower has twelve acres of land when he really has only five.

474 178 [621] One of the most interesting examples of the blending of traditional and modern mutual-aid practices was found in Kalivi, a village of about 2500 in Attica. This village owned some pasture land. In 1914 it formed a committee which took charge of the management of this community land, deriving revenues for the community. In 1920 there was talk of organizing a cooperative, but it did not really get under way until 1926, at which time the village pasture land was turned over to the cooperative which superseded the former committee. Thus, the transition from the older social form [652] to the cooperative went smoothly. The Agricultural Bank had helped the local people decide what was the best kind of cooperative organization for their purposes. They decided that membership should be compulsory for all family heads. In 1928 the cooperative acquired a threshing machine with [243] the funds obtained from the pasture land. This machine as well as newer ones were in use when I visited the village near the middle of June 1953. [293] [751] Organized pandemonium seemed to reign as new loads of wheat sheaves

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

631 647 [177] sought to strengthen the hands of those favoring decentralization in the belief that this would accomplish more with American aid money. On the other hand, those who favor strong centralization tend to think of government primarily in political rather than administrative terms. They see government as an arena where personalities and parties struggle for the opportunity of directing the affairs of state. They realize that much political power is built on patronage or at least the promise of patronage; they also argue that the political process is built upon compromise and that many administrative practices are established in governmental bureaus to forestall any such compromises. Which group is prompted more by disinterested, public-spirited motives can best be determined by the observer on the spot as different personalities, representing these varying points of view, step onto the stage.

• 664 ### The Peasant and Politics

Shortly after my arrival in Greece in the fall of 1952, I encountered an interesting case study of the peasant and politics. All over Greece, one September Sunday, the farmers demonstrated against their government. This affair was treated, as one would expect, quite differently by the various Athenian newspapers, but the general tone of argument never got down to the facts of the peasants' grievance but instead haggled over who was responsible for getting them all stirred up.

[204] One newspaper, *Philelevtheros*, under the caption "The Farmers' Plight," wrote:

> There is no Greek who does not admit the rights of the farmers, or the fact that they are, and always were, the most neglected class in this country. Everyone feels the farmers' plight as if it were his own, and they know that Greek society will never stand on its feet as long as the farmer's lot is a miserable one. Their present fate, however, is not the fault of the Government, but is due to a whole century of reactionary rule. The farmers' demonstrations would have [665] been even stronger and more genuine if the Rally Party agents had not attempted to exploit them. However, they failed in this attempt.

[204] *Ethnos*, a newspaper representing a rival party, reported under the caption "Farmers' Demonstrations":

> Over the whole of Greece, in all those areas where men strive to get the maximum crop from our not very fertile soil, solid demonstrations were held last Sunday. The farmers were protesting with absolutely justified indignation against the indifference the Government is showing in handling their problems, and the way in which it has withdrawn its promises to them.
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> In the face of this Pan-Hellenic uprising, the Government, through its comic Minister of Coordination, and through its press, finds nothing better to give in

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

answer than that the farmers were incited by the Rally Party. As if there were any need of incitement in their case. One does not need incitement when one is hungry and sentenced to despair.[15]

The year does not matter, the name of the party does not matter, for in Greece a political, if not a social, gulf between the village and the city remains. Since 1952, as a later chapter will show, much has been done through the Agricultural Extension Service and other programs to better the condition of the peasantry. The success of such programs inevitably depends upon the skills and attitudes of those trying to carry them out in the name of the central government, but even more depends on the stability and continuity of the central government so that measures which are under way are not canceled and other political adventures substituted instead.

A peasant or a village president has three ways of straightening out some grievance involving the national government. First, he and his fellows can resort to strikes, demonstrations, and — in the case of the guerrilla war — to the support of those who would change the situation by revolution. Second, he can work through the regular administrative or executive channels already described. Through his local president and through the nomarch, many affairs can be carried to those in a position to settle the grievance, or in some cases he may take the time and trouble himself to go to some responsible official in the appropriate ministry for help. In other words, he is trying to find his way through the administrative apparatus of government and to use it to accomplish some objective. A third approach is to work through the political or legislative rather than the administrative channel. This means going to the representative from his district who serves in the national unicameral legislature in an effort to persuade him to intercede with the proper administrative officials. It might also mean going to some political leader, a former minister perhaps, to see if he can use his good graces in the matter.

Enough has been said thus far about Greek officialdom to show some of the difficulties that a villager, as an individual or as a community president, would face in making use of the administrative channels. Are the political outlets any more promising?

I once asked a peasant about a solidly constructed bridge we were then crossing. He said that it was obtained because one of their local people had been a member of parliament and had arranged to have this built. I wondered how long it would be before they had another member of parliament and thereby received some other needed project. And a mayor of one of the Thracian towns confided that he preferred the politically appointed nomarch to the career nomarch because one could go to the members of parliament and have them get an inefficient politically appointed nomarch

1:Sanders Z-5,N (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

662 replaced. Indications such as these showed the importance of the legislature
664 in keeping the administrative apparatus in check, but did not provide any guidelines as to how this might best be done.

But this approach has its negative overtones as well. Over and over again
665 I was told that such-and-such a thing was impossible for the village because
662 it had not voted in support of the party in power. This was one of the points cited by a prosperous Greek merchant, who travels much throughout the country, when he listed changes he considered necessary in the rural parts of the country:

1. Smaller interest rates so there will be greater ease in handling money.
2. Less red tape so that the peasant when he comes to borrow money for a drill doesn't spend more money waiting than he spends for the pump.
3. State employees must understand that they are in the service of the people, especially the peasants, and not expect to be bribed to get a job done.
4. Greater justice so that the gendarme and judge are not primarily interested in a person's party affiliation but will carry out justice.

In other words, party affiliation may influence the administration of justice. From another point of view, working through a member of parliament is really the peasant's way of trying to get around a law. To do this is considered a great accomplishment, for he thinks that rules are made to be broken and evaded. This is because the rules have been made by others whose criteria for developing them are different from his own. For him, individual criteria are more important than rules others have made.

662 I had an impression, gained from hundreds of conversations with peasants throughout Greece, that the peasant prefers the political to the administrative approach. At first, the explanation was hard to find because it was obvious everywhere that the government agencies, though inefficient at times, were helping him reconstruct his destroyed home, assisting him in the purchase of agricultural equipment, teaching his wife and daughters how to can tomatoes and cook fish, and bringing more water to his parched fields. The reason became apparent, however, when I remembered that the
571 Greek peasant is more interested in personal relationships than he is in
662 things or in concrete achievements. He complains if he does not have things, especially if those in other villages are getting them, but does not value them in their own right. They are a measure of how his personal relationships are working out. He honestly feels that he can deal with the politicians sent up from his district to parliament and continues to share this optimistic frame of mind no matter how many times he has been disappointed in the past. Of course, he is content to work through the government official if he can personalize that relationship, to his own advantage, and not be treated as an anonymous citizen who must be dealt with impartially in keeping with the rules. He would rather be dealt with as a person

There is at present a paradoxical situation in Greece. There is pride in the many co-operatives, spread throughout the country; there is delight on the part of some of the technical assistants because the groundwork for the introduction of necessary change is there, and there is dismay on the part of others that the Greeks do not know what co-operation means, that they have to be compelled to work for the benefit of the village, to be prevented from destroying its resources, and to be coerced to co-operate even in efforts for their own welfare. There is distress over the number of pressure groups created to get whatever they can from the government. All this is true. According to their own phrasing of co-operation and within the framework of the meaningful units, the Greeks were, and to some extent are now completely co-operative. Families and villages were responsible for their own indigent; a prominent peasant would impoverish himself to build a village school or improve the water system. They made their own decisions and carried them out; they chose their own leaders. The first co-operatives were started on local initiative in the last century. But later, the central government began to institute co-operatives on a foreign pattern, taking no account of the existing units of co-operation, or of the existing patterns of self-participation. The villages were not allowed a responsible role in creating the co-operatives—in fact, in co-operating. The state-financed Agricultural Bank has been in charge of creating local credit co-operatives but the peasants have felt that this was a government affair. Actually the rate, which was eight per cent at the time of the establishment of the bank in 1928, and is now as high as 18 per cent, with incidental fees, which peasants get from the bank through their credit co-operatives, does not seem to have been set with the welfare of the farmers in view, or according to their decision. In 1936, more than 3,000 of the 3,761 were credit co-operatives under the central supervision of the state. The others, such as the producers' co-operatives, were mainly compulsory. Such were the citrus growers' associations in Crete, the wine growers' association in Samos, Levkas, Attica, and Chalkis. There are now marketing co-operatives and machine-owning co-operatives, as well as a growing number of processing co-operatives. In general, the co-operatives are firmly controlled by the central government and the farmers are not even allowed to co-operate to the extent of electing their own officers. As a result, the attitude toward external authority has been evoked, and, in most cases, co-operation has to be compulsory as all government legislation has to be compulsory, and the so-called co-operative decisions are circumvented like all government decisions. Another attitude has also been evoked, particularly among those Greeks who welcomed the dictatorship; deprived of responsible decision and participation, these people fell into the pattern of accepted dependency; such people, unaware that they are "co-operating", say: "The government is

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
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1844-54, tells the tale and says the entire bratstvo was extinct. The fishermen on the lake had to pay the vladika yearly a barrel of fish for fishing rights. No barrel arrived. They were asked why, and wickedly replied that they had not been able to catch any fish. The vladika was patient. Still no fish arrived. The fishermen then explained: "There are now no fish in the lake." "No," said the vladika firmly, "*there are none and there will be none.*"

To everyone's horror the lake was fishless. The fishermen hurried to the vladika and prayed him to withdraw his curse. He kindly did so—and the fish reappeared.

This mighty prelate was canonized by the Montenegrin Church shortly after his death, and is the revered St. Petar Cetinski.

His curses, however, pale before that laid on the Greek statesman Venizelos in 1916. I give it to show what the Orthodox Church is capable of when roused, and the present belief in the curse in the Near East. Venizelos was denounced for having "betrayed the nation to the Anglo-French." "Therefore against the traitor Venizelos we have invoked the following injuries: the ulcers of Job, the whale of Jonah, the leprosy of Naaman, the bite of Death, the shuddering of the dying, the thunderbolt of Hell, and the malediction of God and man. We shall call for the same injuries upon those who, at the forthcoming elections, shall vote for the traitor Venizelos, and further pray for their hands to wither and for them to become deaf and blind. Amen."

Curse-pits were dug, and crowds, filing by, put their curses upon stones and hurled them into the pits.

True, the ecclesiastics who laid the curse got into trouble. But they had, in fact, but expressed—flamboyantly—the feelings of the people. Venizelos, having once fallen, has never returned to power. The peasant has little faith in elections—he has every reason to doubt their efficacy; but of the efficacy of a real good curse he has ample evidence.

In Albania a curse may lie for generations on a family and end it. I visited the house of a family group at Plani in Pulati. The curse was that the family should not multiply, and I was assured it was dying out. No one knew who had laid the curse and all attempts to remove it had failed. Eighteen persons were living crowded in its one room. In cases of this kind it is obvious that unwholesome surroundings, bad water, or inherited disease is the origin of the "curse." To those so "cursed," however, the thing is a mystery, and mysterious means are the only ones used to combat it.

All medicine begins as magic. The invention of the microscope has at last revealed many of the real "demons." But even in England there are still people who prefer quack remedies to scientific "demon"-slaying ones.